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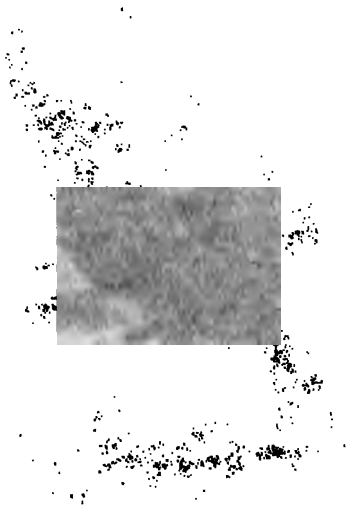
THE TEMPLE DRAMATISTS

THE MERRY DEVIL OF EDMONTON

The text here adopted is founded upon that of Warnke and Proescholdt's edition; but the spelling has been modernised, and in some cases I have departed from their readings.

Waltham Abbey.

THE
MERRY DEVIL
OF EDMONTON
A COMEDY



Shakespeare, William, pseudon.

THE MERRY DEVIL OF EDMONTON

A COMEDY

Edited with a Preface, Notes and Glossary by

HUGH WALKER, M.A.

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PREFACE

Editions of the Play. The first edition now known of *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* was published in 1608; and as the play was only entered at Stationers' Hall in October of the previous year, we may reasonably infer that it had not before been printed. Other editions followed in 1612, 1617, 1626, 1631, and 1655. It was included in Dodsley's *Old Plays*, and has been reprinted in the subsequent editions of that collection. It also appeared in Miller's *Ancient British Drama* (1810). But by far the most scholarly and complete of modern editions is that of Warnke and Proescholdt (Halle, 1884), to whom I am largely indebted. Their edition is exhaustive as to the variations of the text and almost equally good on the bibliographical side of the introduction. The notes are less full.

Date of Composition. The first known reference to the play is contained in the *Blacke Book* by T. M., 1604. This T. M., who is supposed to have been Thomas Middleton, quotes the title, and alludes to the comedy as an amusing one: 'Give him leave to see *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*, or *A Woman Kill'd with Kindness*.' There is no specific internal evidence, for the storming of St Quentin's, alluded to in I. ii. 24, is too early to be the basis of an argument. Tieck assigned it to the year 1600 because he believed it to be by Shakespeare, and thought that among Shakespeare's plays the one which had most in common with it was *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

The conjecture falls with the reason upon which it is founded, and few would now maintain the Shakespearian authorship of *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*. All that it seems possible to say is that it must have been written, at latest, soon after the year 1600, and that from style and tone and structure it may with greater probability be referred to an unknown date before, but not very long before, that year.

Authorship. *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* is an anonymous play, and there is no evidence of weight sufficient to enable us to decide between the various assertions and suggestions which have been made as to the authorship. Kirkman, the bookseller, ascribed it to no less a person than William Shakespeare, but Kirkman's sole authority was a volume, originally in the library of King Charles II., and afterwards in the Garrick Collection, containing *Mucedorus*, *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*, and *Fair Em*, and lettered with the name of Shakespeare. *Mucedorus* and *Fair Em* have nevertheless been refused by the critics a place among the works of Shakespeare, and strong internal evidence would be needed to obtain another verdict in the case of *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*. Such evidence cannot be found. There are indeed traces of the influence of Shakespeare; but pleasant as *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* is, it does not seem probable that Smug and the Host and Sir John are the work of the hand that fashioned Falstaff and his group. There are comic possibilities in these characters that Shakespeare would almost certainly have made more of; and, as Charles Knight has suggested, it is not probable that he would have gone so near to duplicating his own characters as he would have done on the supposition that he created both the Host

in the present play and the Host in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Moreover, we may apply to the present case Lamb's remarks on the difference between Heywood and Shakespeare: 'We miss *the poet*, that which in Shakespeare always appears out and above the surface of *the nature*.' The characters 'are exactly what we see, but of the best kind of what we see in life. Shakespeare makes us believe, while we are among his lovely creations, that they are nothing but what we are familiar with, as in dreams new things seem old; but we awake, and sigh for the difference.'

Michael Drayton has also been named as the author of *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*, but there is no evidence beyond the statements of Thomas Coxeter, an untrustworthy authority, who says that he had seen an old MS. inscribed, 'by Michael Drayton'; and William Oldys, who merely remarks that 'it has been said' that Drayton wrote it.

After Drayton we have nothing but bare conjecture. Hazlitt thought it was more likely to be by Thomas Heywood than by any other writer; but though it bears a general resemblance to the spirit and tone of Heywood, it would be rash in the extreme to ascribe the play to him without more definite reasons than have ever yet been adduced.

Source of the Play. 'This drama,' says Hazlitt in his Introduction in Dodsley's *Old English Plays*, 'was suggested by, rather than founded on, the traditional account handed down in print of Peter Fabel, popularly known as the "Merry Devil of Edmonton."' This is strictly accurate. Fabell in his character of magician has really no vital connection with the development of the play, and the *dénouement* could easily have

been brought about without his agency. Indeed, though he promises to raise spirits and to produce illusion, it would appear that the mistakes all take place through ordinary causes. The object of introducing him was doubtless to win the advantage of the popularity attaching to his name; and we may thus explain the curious want of cohesion between what is in the text (following Warnke and Proescholdt) called the Induction, and the body of the play. The Induction portrays Fabell cheating the devil and winning by a trick another seven years of immunity. We naturally expect, therefore, either a comic or a serious variation of the theme of *Faust*; but instead the subject is simply dropped.

Little is known about Fabell beyond what we learn in the play. A prose tract by Thomas Brewer on the life and death of the Merry Devil of Edmonton, with the pranks of Smug the Smith, Sir John and Mine Host of the George, was published in 1631. It had, however, been entered at Stationers' Hall in 1608. Only a small portion of this tract is devoted to Fabell, the greater part detailing the adventures of Smug. Brewer tells us that 'in Edmonton he [Fabell] was born, lived and died in the reign of King Henry VII.'

We may safely conclude that the low comedy of the piece, as well as the character of Fabell, was the bequest of tradition. The love story, and the characters of the knights, etc., are otherwise unknown, and were probably the invention of the dramatist.

Contemporary and other References to the Play. We may reasonably infer that *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* was one of the most popular of Elizabethan comedies, for few of

them passed through so many editions. Moreover, the terms in which it is alluded to in the *Blacke Book* imply that it was looked upon as an effective and amusing comedy. But the most decisive reference is in the prologue to Ben Jonson's play, *The Devil is an Ass*, where he speaks of it as the 'dear delight' of the people:—

> 'If you'll come
> To see new plays, pray you afford us room,
> And show this but the same face you have done
> Your dear delight, the Devil of Edmonton.'

In later days *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*, standing among the miscellaneous group of anonymous plays, has been less widely known. It has, however, always remained a favourite with professed students of the Elizabethan drama. Hazlitt declared it to be 'assuredly not unworthy of' Shakespeare, while Lamb says that it 'seems written to make the reader happy.' In this remark Lamb draws attention to its characteristic excellence. *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* is a happy, lively romance, full of honest fun, and free from nearly everything that can be stigmatised as addressed to coarser tastes and passions. Perhaps its most serious defect is a certain want of cohesion between the parts, especially between the supernatural element of the Induction and the subsequent action.

THE MERRY DEVIL OF EDMONTON

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

SIR ARTHUR CLARE
SIR RICHARD MOUNCHENSEY
SIR RALPH JERNINGHAM
HARRY CLARE
RAYMOND MOUNCHENSEY
FRANK JERNINGHAM
PETER FABELL, the Merry Devil
COREB, a Spirit
BLAGUE, the Host
SIR JOHN, a Priest
BANKS, the Miller of Waltham
SMUG, the Smith of Edmonton
Sexton
BILBO
BRIAN
RALPH, Brian's man
FRIAR HILDERSHAM
BENEDICK
Chamberlain

LADY DORCAS CLARE
MILLICENT CLARE, her Daughter
The Prioress of Cheston Nunnery
Nuns and Attendants.

THE PROLOGUE

YOUR silence and attention, worthy friends,
That your free spirits may with more pleasing sense
Relish the life of this our active scene!
To which intent, to calm this murmuring breath,
We ring this round with our invoking spells;
If that your listening ears be yet prepar'd
To entertain the subject of our play,
Lend us your patience!
'Tis Peter Fabell, a renownèd scholar,
Whose fame hath still been hitherto forgot
By all the writers of this latter age.
In Middlesex his birth and his abode,
Not full seven mile from this great famous city;
That, for his fame in sleights and magic won,
Was call'd the merry Fiend of Edmonton.
If any here make doubt of such a name,
In Edmonton yet fresh unto this day,
Fix'd in the wall of that old ancient church,
His monument remaineth to be seen;
His memory yet in the mouths of men,
That whilst he liv'd he could deceive the Devil.

Imagine now that whilst he is retir'd
From Cambridge back unto his native home,
Suppose the silent, sable-visag'd night
Casts her black curtain over all the world ;
And whilst he sleeps within his silent bed,
Toil'd with the studies of the passèd day,
The very time and hour wherein that spirit
That many years attended his command,
And oftentimes 'twixt Cambridge and that town
Had in a minute borne him through the air,
By composition 'twixt the fiend and him,
Comes now to claim the scholar for his due.
[*Draws the curtains.*
Behold him here, laid on his restless couch,
His fatal chime preparèd at his head,
His chamber guarded with these sable sleights,
And by him stands that necromantic chair,
In which he makes his direful invocations,
And binds the fiends that shall obey his will.
Sit with a pleasèd eye, until you know
The comic end of our sad tragic show. [*Exit.*

THE MERRY DEVIL OF EDMONTON

INDUCTION

The chime goes, in which time Fabell is oft seen to stare about him, and hold up his hands.

Fab. What means the tolling of this fatal chime?
O, what a trembling horror strikes my heart!
My stiffen'd hair stands upright on my head,
As do the bristles of a porcupine.

Enter Coreb, a Spirit.

Cor. Fabell, awake! or I will bear thee hence
Headlong to hell.
Fab. Ha, ha,
Why dost thou wake me? Coreb, is it thou?
Cor. 'Tis I.
Fab. I know thee well: I hear the watchful dogs
With hollow howling tell of thy approach;
The lights burn dim, affrighted with thy presence;
And this distemper'd and tempestuous night
Tells me the air is troubled with some devil.

Cor. Come, art thou ready?
Fab. Whither? or to what?
Cor. Why, Scholar, this the hour my date expires;
I must depart, and come to claim my due.
Fab. Ha, what is thy due?
Cor. Fabell, thyself!
Fab. O, let not darkness hear thee speak that word,
Lest that with force it hurry hence amain,
And leave the world to look upon my woe:
Yet overwhelm me with this globe of earth,
And let a little sparrow with her bill
Take but so much as she can bear away,
That, every day thus losing of my load,
I may again in time yet hope to rise.
Cor. Didst thou not write thy name in thine own blood,
And drew'st the formal deed 'twixt thee and me,
And is it not recorded now in hell?
Fab. Why com'st thou in this stern and horrid shape,
Not in familiar sort, as thou wast wont?
Cor. Because the date of thy command is out,
And I am master of thy skill and thee.
Fab. Coreb, thou angry and impatient spirit,
I have earnest business for a private friend;
Reserve me, spirit, until some further time.
Cor. I will not for the mines of all the earth.
Fab. Then let me rise, and ere I leave the world,
Dispatch some business that I have to do;
And in mean time repose thee in that chair.

Cor. Fabell, I will. [*Sits down.*

Fab. O, that this soul, that cost so great a price
As the dear precious blood of her Redeemer,
Inspir'd with knowledge, should by that alone
Which makes a man so mean unto the powers,
Even lead him down into the depth of hell,
When men in their own pride strive to know more
Than man should know!
For this alone God cast the angels down.
The infinity of arts is like a sea,
Into which, when men will take in hand to sail
Further than reason, which should be his pilot,
Hath skill to guide him, losing once his compass,
He falleth to such deep and dangerous whirlpools,
As he doth lose the very sight of heaven:
The more he strives to come to quiet harbour,
The further still he finds himself from land.
Man, striving still to find the depth of evil,
Seeking to be a God, becomes a devil.

Cor. Come, Fabell, hast thou done?

Fab. Yes, yes. Come hither!

Cor. Fabell, I cannot.

Fab. Cannot?—What ails your hollowness?

Cor. Good Fabell, help me!

Fab. Alas! where lies your grief? some *Aqua-vitae*!
The Devil's very sick, I fear he'll die;
For he looks very ill.

Cor. Dar'st thou deride the minister of darkness?

In Lucifer's dread name Coreb conjures thee
To set him free.
Fab. I will not for the mines of all the earth,
Unless thou give me liberty to see
Seven years more, before thou seize on me.
Cor. Fabell, I give it thee.
Fab. Swear, damnèd fiend!
Cor. Unbind me, and by hell I will not touch thee,
Till seven years from this hour be full expir'd.
Fab. Enough, come out.
Cor. A vengeance take thy art!
Live and convert all piety to evil:
Never did man thus over-reach the Devil.
No time on earth like Phaetonic flames
Can have perpetual being. I 'll return
To my infernal mansion; but be sure,
Thy seven years done, no trick shall make me tarry,
But, Coreb, thou to hell shalt Fabell carry. [*Exit.*
Fab. Then, thus betwixt us two this variance ends,
Thou to thy fellow fiends, I to my friends! [*Exit.*

ACT I

SCENE I

Enter Sir Arthur Clare, Dorcas, his lady, Millicent, his daughter, young Harry Clare; the men booted, the Gentlewomen in cloaks and safeguards. Blague, the merry Host of the George, comes in with them.

Host. Welcome, good knight, to the George at Waltham, my free-hold, my tenements, goods and chattels! Madam, here's a room is the very Homer and Iliads of a lodging, it hath none of the four elements in it; I built it out of the centre, and I drink ne'er the less sack. Welcome, my little waste of maiden-heads! What? I serve the good Duke of Norfolk.

Sir Ar. God-a-mercy, my good host Blague! Thou hast a good seat here.

Host. 'Tis correspondent or so: there's not a Tartarian nor a carrier shall breathe upon your geldings; they have villanous rank feet, the rogues, and they shall not sweat in my linen. Knights and lords too have been drunk in my house, I thank the destinies.

Y. Cla. Prithee, good sinful innkeeper, will that corrup-

tion, thine ostler, look well to my gelding. Hey, a pox of these rushes!

Host. You, Saint Dennis, your gelding shall walk without doors, and cool his feet for his master's sake. By the body of St. George, I have an excellent intellect to go steal some venison. Now, when wast thou in the forest?

Y. Cla. Away, you stale mess of white broth! Come hither, sister, let me help you.

Sir Ar. Mine host, is not Sir Richard Mounchensey come yet, according to our appointment, when we last dined here?

Host. The knight's not yet apparent.—Marry, here's a forerunner that summons a parle, and saith, he'll be here top and top-gallant presently.

Sir Ar. 'Tis well. Good mine host, go down, and see breakfast be provided.

Host. Knight, thy breath hath the force of a woman, it takes me down; I am for the baser element of the kitchen: I retire like a valiant soldier, face point-blank to the foeman, or, like a courtier, that must not show the Prince his posteriors; I vanish to know my canvasadoes, and my interrogatories, for I serve the good Duke of Norfolk. [*Exit.*

Sir Ar. How doth my Lady? are you not weary, Madam?

Come hither, I must talk in private with you;
My daughter Millicent must not overhear.

Mil. Ay, whispering? pray God it tend my good!
Strange fear assails my heart, usurps my blood.
[*Aside.*
Sir Ar. You know our meeting with the knight Mounchensey
Is to assure our daughter to his heir.
L. Dor. 'Tis, without question.
Sir Ar. Two tedious winters have past o'er, since first
This couple lov'd each other, and in passion
Glued first their naked hands with youthful moisture—
Just so long, on my knowledge.
L. Dor. And what of this?
Sir Ar. This morning should my daughter lose her name,
And to Mounchensey's house convey our arms,
Quarter'd within his 'scutcheon; th' affiance, made
'Twixt him and her, this morning should be seal'd.
L. Dor. I know it should.
Sir Ar. But there are crosses, wife; here's one in Waltham,
Another at the Abbey, and the third
At Cheston; and 'tis ominous to pass
Any of these without a pater-noster.
Crosses of love still thwart this marriage,
Whilst that we two, like spirits, walk in night
About those stony and hard-hearted plots.
Mil. O God, what means my father? [*Aside.*
Sir Ar. For look you, wife, the riotous old knight

Hath overrun his annual revenue
In keeping jolly Christmas all the year:
The nostrils of his chimney are still stuff'd
With smoke, more chargeable than cane-tobacco:
His hawks devour his fattest hogs, whilst Simple,
His leanest cur, eats his hounds' carrion.
Besides, I heard of late, his younger brother,
A Turkey merchant, hath sore suck'd the knight
By means of some great losses on the sea;
That, you conceive me, before God, all 's naught,
His seat is weak. Thus, each thing rightly scann'd,
You 'll see a flight, wife, shortly of his land.

Mil. Treason to my heart's truest sovereign!
How soon is love smothered in foggy gain! [*Aside.*

L. Dor. But how shall we prevent this dangerous match?

Sir Ar. I have a plot, a trick, and this it is—
Under this colour I 'll break off the match:
I 'll tell the knight that now my mind is chang'd
For marrying of my daughter: for I intend
To send her unto Cheston Nunnery.

Mil. O me accurst! [*Aside.*

Sir Ar. There to become a most religious nun.

Mil. I 'll first be buried quick. [*Aside.*

Sir Ar. To spend her beauty in most private prayers.

Mil. I 'll sooner be a sinner in forsaking
Mother and father. [*Aside.*

Sir Ar. How dost like my plot?

L. Dor. Exceeding well; but is it your intent
She shall continue there?
Sir Ar. Continue there? Ha, ha, that were a jest!
You know a virgin may continue there
A twelvemonth and a day only on trial.
There shall my daughter sojourn some three months,
And in meantime I'll compass a fair match
'Twixt youthful Jerningham, the lusty heir
Of Sir Ralph Jerningham, dwelling in the forest.
I think they'll both come hither with Mounchensey.
L. Dor. Your care argues the love you bear our child;
I will subscribe to anything you'll have me.
[*Exeunt.*
Mil. You will subscribe to it! Good, good, 'tis well;
Love hath two chairs of state, heaven and hell.
My dear Mounchensey, thou my death shalt rue,
Ere to thy heart Millicent prove untrue. [*Exit.*

SCENE II

Enter Blague.

Host. Ostlers, you knaves and commanders, take the horses of the knights and competitors: your honourable hulks have put into harbour, they'll take in fresh water here, and I have provided clean chamber-pots. Via, they come!

Enter Sir Richard Mounchensey, Sir Ralph Jerningham, Young Frank Jerningham, Raymond Mounchensey, Peter Fabell, and Bilbo.

Host. The destinies be most neat chamberlains to these swaggering puritans, knights of the subsidy.

Sir Rich. God-a-mercy, good mine host.

Sir Ralph. Thanks, good host Blague.

Host. Room for my case of pistols, that have Greek and Latin bullets in them; let me cling to your flanks, my nimble Giberalters, and blow wind in your calves to make them swell bigger. Ha, I'll caper in mine own fee-simple. Away with punctilios and orthography! I serve the good Duke of Norfolk. Bilbo, *Tityre, tu patulæ recubans sub tegmine fagi.*

Bil. Truly, mine host, Bilbo, though he be somewhat out of fashion, will be your only blade still. I have a villanous sharp stomach to slice a breakfast.

Host. Thou shalt have it without any more discontinuance, releases, or attournment. What! we know our terms of hunting and the sea-card.

Bil. And do you serve the good Duke of Norfolk still?

Host. Still, and still, and still, my soldier of St. Quentin's! Come, follow me; I have Charles' wain below in a butt of sack, 'twill glister like your crab-fish.

Bil. You have fine scholar-like terms; your Cooper's Dictionary is your only book to study in a cellar, a

man shall find very strange words in it. Come, my host, let's serve the good Duke of Norfolk.

Host. And still, and still, and still, my boy, I'll serve the good Duke of Norfolk.

[*Exeunt Host and Bilbo.*

Enter Sir Arthur Clare, Harry Clare, and Millicent.

Sir Ralph. Good Sir Arthur Clare!

Sir Ar. What gentleman is that? I know him not.

Sir Rich. 'Tis Master Fabell, sir, a Cambridge scholar, My son's dear friend.

Sir Ar. Sir, I entreat you know me.

Fab. Command me, sir; I am affected to you For your Mounchensey's sake.

Sir Ar. Alas, for him, I not respect whether he sink or swim! A word in private, Sir Ralph Jerningham.

Ray. Methinks your father looketh strangely on me: Say, love, why are you sad?

Mil. I am not, sweet; Passion is strong, when woe with woe doth meet.

Sir Ar. Shall's in to breakfast? After we'll conclude The cause of this our coming: in and feed, And let that usher a more serious deed.

Mil. Whilst you desire his grief, my heart shall bleed.

Y. Jer. Raymond Mounchensey, come, be frolic, friend, This is the day thou hast expected long.

Ray. Pray God, dear Jerningham, it prove so happy.
Y. Jer. There's nought can alter it! Be merry, lad!
Fab. There's nought shall alter it! Be lively, Raymond!
Stand any opposition 'gainst thy hope,
Art shall confront it with her largest scope.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Peter Fabell, solus.

Fab. Good old Mounchensey, is thy hap so ill,
That for thy bounty and thy royal parts
Thy kind alliance should be held in scorn,
And after all these promises my Clare
Refuse to give his daughter to thy son,
Only because thy revenues cannot reach
To make her dowage of so rich a jointure
As can the heir of wealthy Jerningham?
And therefore is the false fox now in hand
To strike a match betwixt her and the other;
And the old grey-beards now are close together,
Plotting it in the garden. Is't even so?
Raymond Mounchensey, boy, have thou and I
Thus long at Cambridge read the liberal arts,
The metaphysics, magic, and those parts
Of the most secret deep philosophy?
Have I so many melancholy nights

Watch'd on the top of Peter-house highest tower,
And come we back unto our native home,
For want of skill to lose the wench thou lov'st?
We'll first hang Enfield in such rings of mist
As never rose from any dampish fen:
I'll make the brinèd sea to rise at Ware,
And drown the marshes unto Stratford Bridge;
I'll drive the deer from Waltham in their walks,
And scatter them like sheep in every field.
We may perhaps be cross'd; but, if we be,
He shall cross the Devil, that but crosses me.

Enter Raymond, Young Jerningham, and Young Clare.

But here comes Raymond, disconsolate and sad,
And here's the gallant that must have the wench.
Y. Jer. I prithee, Raymond, leave these solemn dumps:
Revive thy spirits, thou that before hast been
More watchful than the day-proclaiming cock,
As sportive as a kid, as frank and merry
As Mirth herself!
If aught in me may thy content procure,
It is thine own, thou may'st thyself assure.
Ray. Ha, Jerningham, if any but thyself
Had spoke that word, it would have come as cold
As the bleak northern winds upon the face
Of winter.
From thee they have some power upon my blood;

Yet being from thee,—had but that hollow sound
Come from the lips of any living man,
It might have won the credit of mine ear;
From thee it cannot.

Y. Jer. If I understand thee, I am a villain:
What, dost thou speak in parables to thy friends?

Y. Cla. Come, boy, and make me this same groaning love,—
Troubled with stitches and the cough a' th' lungs,
That wept his eyes out when he was a child,
And ever since hath shot at hoodman-blind,—
Make her leap, caper, jerk, and laugh, and sing,
And play me horse-tricks;
Make Cupid wanton as his mother's dove:
But in this sort, boy, I would have thee love.

Fab. Why, how now, madcap? What, my lusty Frank,
So near a wife, and will not tell your friend?
But you will to this gear in hugger-mugger;
Art thou turned miser, rascal, in thy loves?

Y. Jer. Who, I? 'Sblood, what should all you see in me, that I should look like a married man, ha? Am I bald? are my legs too little for my hose? If I feel anything in my forehead, I am a villain. Do I wear a nightcap? do I bend in the hams? What dost thou see in me, that I should be towards marriage, ha?

Y. Cla. What, thou married? let me look upon thee, rogue. Who has given out this of thee? how cám'st

thou into this ill name? What company hast thou been in, rascal?

Fab. You are the man, sir, must have Millicent,
The match is making in the garden now;
Her jointure is agreed on, and th' old men,
Your fathers, mean to launch their busy bags,
But in meantime to thrust Mounchensey off.
For colour of this new intended match,
Fair Millicent to Cheston must be sent,
To take the approbation for a nun.
Ne'er look upon me, lad, the match is done.

Y. Jer. Raymond Mounchensey, now I touch thy grief
With the true feeling of a zealous friend.
And as for fair and beauteous Millicent,
With my vain breath I will not seek to slubber
Her angel-like perfections; but thou know'st
That Essex hath the saint that I adore.
Where e'er did we meet thee and wanton springs,
That like a wag thou hast not laugh'd at me,
And with regardless jesting mock'd my love?
How many a sad and weary summer night
My sighs have drunk the dew from off the earth,
And I have taught the nightingale to wake,
And from the meadows sprung the early lark
An hour before she should have list to sing:
I have loaded the poor minutes with my moans,
That I have made the heavy slow-pac'd hours
To hang like heavy clogs upon the day

But, dear Mounchensey, had not my affection
Seiz'd on the beauty of another dame,
Before I 'd wrong the chase, and o'ergive th' love
Of one so worthy and so true a friend,
I will abjure both beauty and her sight,
And will in love become a counterfeit.

Ray. Dear Jerningham, thou hast begot my life,
And from the mouth of hell, where now I sat,
I feel my spirit rebound against the stars:
Thou hast conquer'd me, dear friend; in my free soul
Neither time nor death can by their power control.

Fab. Frank Jerningham, thou art a gallant boy;
And were he not my pupil, I would say
He were as fine a mettled gentleman,
Of as free spirit, and of as fine a temper
As is in England; and he is a man
That very richly may deserve thy love.
But, noble Clare, this while of our discourse,
What may Mounchensey's honour to thyself
Exact upon the measure of thy grace?

Y. Cla. Raymond Mounchensey? I would have thee know,
He does not breathe this air,
Whose love I cherish, and whose soul I love
More than Mounchensey's:
Nor ever in my life did see the man
Whom, for his wit and many virtuous parts,

I think more worthy of my sister's love.
But since the matter grows unto this pass,
I must not seem to cross my father's will;
But when thou list to visit her by night,
My horse is saddled, and the stable door
Stands ready for thee; use them at thy pleasure.
In honest marriage wed her frankly, boy,
And if thou gett'st her, lad, God give thee joy!

Ray. Then, care, away! Let fates my fall pretend,
Back'd with the favours of so true a friend!

Fab. Let us alone, to bustle for the set;
For age and craft with wit and art have met.
I'll make my spirits to dance such nightly jigs
Along the way 'twixt this and Tot'nam cross,
The carriers' jades shall cast their heavy packs,
And the strong hedges scarce shall keep them in:
The milkmaid's cuts shall turn the wenches off,
And lay the dossers tumbling in the dust:
The frank and merry London 'prentices,
That come for cream and lusty country cheer,
Shall lose their way; and, scrambling in the ditches,
All night shall whoop and hollow, cry and call,
Yet none to other find the way at all.

Ray. Pursue the project, scholar: what we can do
To help endeavour, join our lives thereto! [*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE I

Enter Banks, Sir John, and Smug.

Banks. Take me with you, good Sir John! A plague on thee, Smug! an thou touchest liquor, thou art foundered straight. What! are your brains always water-mills? must they ever run round?

Smug. Banks, your ale is a Philistine fox; heart, there's fire i' the tail on't; you are a rogue to charge us with mugs i' th' rearward. A plague of this wind; O, it tickles our catastrophe.

Sir John. Neighbour Banks of Waltham, and Goodman Smug, the honest smith of Edmonton, as I dwell betwixt you both at Enfield, I know the taste of both your ale-houses; they are good both, smart both. Hem, grass and hay! we are all mortal; let's live till we die, and be merry; and there's an end.

Banks. Well said, Sir John, you are of the same humour still; and doth the water run the same way still, boy?

Smug. Vulcan was a rogue to him ; Sir John, lock, lock, lock fast, Sir John ; so, Sir John. I'll one of these years, when it shall please the goddesses and the destinies, be drunk in your company ; that's all now, and God send us health. Shall I swear I love you?

Sir John. No oaths, no oaths, good neighbour Smug ;
We'll wet our lips together and hug ;
Carouse in private, and elevate the heart, and the liver and the lights—and the lights, mark you me, within us ; for, hem, grass and hay ! we are all mortal ; let's live till we die, and be merry ; and there's an end.

Banks. But to our former motion about stealing some venison ; whither go we?

Sir John. Into the forest, neighbour Banks, into Brian's walk, the mad keeper.

Smug. 'Sblood ! I'll tickle your keeper.

Banks. I' faith, thou art always drunk when we have need of thee.

Smug. Need of me? 'sheart ! you shall have need of me always, while there's iron in an anvil.

Banks. Master Parson, may the smith go, think you, being in this taking?

Smug. Go? I'll go in spite of all the bells in Waltham.

Sir John. The question is, good neighbour Banks—let me see : the moon shines to-night,—there's not a narrow bridge betwixt this and the forest,—his

brain will be settled ere night; he may go, he may go, neighbour Banks. Now we want none but the company of mine host Blague of the George at Waltham; if he were here, our consort were full. Look where comes my good host, the Duke of Norfolk's man! and how? and how? ahem, grass and hay! we are not yet mortal; let 's live till we die, and be merry; and there 's an end. 54

Enter Host.

Host. Ha, my Castilian dialogues! and art thou in breath still, boy? Miller, doth the match hold? Smith, I see by thy eyes thou hast been reading little Geneva print: but wend we merrily to the forest, to steal some of the king's deer! I 'll meet you at the time appointed. Away, I have knights and colonels at my house, and must tend the Hungarians. If we be scared in the forest, we 'll meet in the church-porch at Enfield; is 't correspondent? 63

Banks. 'Tis well; but how, if any of us should be taken?

Smug. He shall have ransom, by the Lord.

Host. Tush, the knave keepers are my bosonians and my pensioners. Nine o'clock! be valiant, my little Gogmagogs; I 'll fence with all the justices in Hertfordshire. I 'll have a buck till I die; I 'll slay a doe while I live. Hold your bow straight and steady! I serve the good Duke of Norfolk. 71

Smug. O rare! who-ho-ho, boy!

Sir John. Peace, neighbour Smug! You see this is a boor, a boor of the country, an illiterate boor, and yet the citizen of good fellows. Come, let's provide; ahem, grass and hay! we are not yet all mortal; we'll live till we die, and be merry; and there's an end. Come, Smug!

Smug. Good night, Waltham—who-ho-ho, boy!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Enter the Knights and Gentlemen from breakfast again.

Sir Rich. Nor I for thee, Clare, not of this.
What? hast thou fed me all this while with shalls?
And com'st to tell me now thou lik'st it not?

Sir Ar. I do not hold thy offer competent;
Nor do I like th' assurance of thy land,
The title is so brangled with thy debts.

Sir Rich. Too good for thee; and, knight, thou knowest it well,
I fawn'd not on thee for thy goods, not I;
'Twas thine own motion; that thy wife doth know.

L. Dor. Husband, it was so; he lies not in that.

Sir Ar. Hold thy chat, quean.

Sir Rich. To which I hearken'd willingly, and the rather,

Because I was persuaded it proceeded
From love thou bor'st to me and to my boy;
And gav'st him free access unto thy house,
Where he hath not behav'd him to thy child
But as befits a gentleman to do:
Nor is my poor distressèd state so low,
That I 'll shut up my doors, I warrant thee.

Sir Ar. Let it suffice, Mounchensey, I mislike it;
Nor think thy son a match fit for my child.

Sir Rich. I tell thee, Clare, his blood is good and clear,
As the best drop that panteth in thy veins:
But for this maid, thy fair and virtuous child,
She is no more disparag'd by thy baseness
Than the most orient and the precious jewel,
Which still retains his lustre and his beauty,
Although a slave were owner of the same.

Sir Ar. She is the last is left me to bestow,
And her I mean to dedicate to God.

Sir Rich. You do, sir?

Sir Ar. Sir, sir, I do, she is mine own.

Sir Rich. And pity she is so!—
Damnation dog thee and thy wretched pelf! [*Aside.*

Sir Ar. Not thou, Mounchensey, shalt bestow my child.

Sir Rich. Neither shalt thou bestow her where thou mean'st.

Sir Ar. What wilt thou do?

Sir Rich. No matter, let that be;
I will do that, perhaps, shall anger thee:
Thou hast wrong'd my love, and, by God's blessed angel,
Thou shalt well know it.
Sir Ar. Tut, brave not me!
Sir Rich. Brave thee, base churl! Were 't not for manhood sake—
I say no more, but that there be some by
Whose blood is hotter than ours is,
Which, being stirr'd, might make us both repent
This foolish meeting. But, Harry Clare,
Although thy father have abused my friendship,
Yet I love thee, I do, my noble boy,
I do, i' faith.
L. Dor. Ay, do, do, fill all the world with talk of us, man; man, I never look'd for better at your hands.
Fab. I hoped your great experience and your years
Would have prov'd patience rather to your soul,
Than with this frantic and untamed passion
To whet their skeins. And, but for that
I hope their friendships are too well confirm'd,
And their minds temper'd with more kindly heat,
Than for their froward parents' soars,
That they should break forth into public brawls.
Howe'er the rough hand of th' untoward world
Hath moulded your proceedings in this matter,
Yet I am sure the first intent was love:

Then since the first spring was so sweet and warm,
Let it die gently; ne'er kill it with a scorn.

Ray. O thou base world, how leprous is that soul
That is once lim'd in that polluted mud!
O Sir Arthur, you have startled his free active spirits
With a too sharp spur for his mind to bear.
Have patience, sir; the remedy to woe
Is to leave what of force we must forego.

Mil. And I must take a twelvemonth's approbation,
That in meantime this sole and private life
At the year's end may fashion me a wife.
But, sweet Mounchensey, ere this year be done,
Thou'st be a friar, if that I be a nun.
And, father, ere young Jerningham's I 'll be,
I will turn mad to spite both him and thee.
[*Aside.*

Sir Ar. Wife, come to horse, and, huswife, make you ready;
For, if I live, I swear by this good light,
I 'll see you lodg'd in Cheston house to-night.
[*Exeunt.*

Sir Rich. Raymond, away! Thou seest how matters fall.
Churl, hell consume thee, and thy pelf, and all!

Fab. Now, Master Clare, you see how matters fadge;
Your Millicent must needs be made a nun.
Well, sir, we are the men must ply this match:

Hold you your peace, and be a looker on,
And send her unto Cheston when he will,
I'll send me fellows of a handful high
Into the cloisters where the nuns frequent,
Shall make them skip like does about the dale,
And make the lady prioress of the house
To play at leap-frog, naked in their smocks,
Until the merry wenches at their mass
Cry teehee weehee;
And tickling these mad lasses in their flanks,
Shall sprawl, and squeak, and pinch their fellow-nuns.
Be lively, boys, before the wench we lose,
I'll make the abbess wear the canon's hose.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Enter Harry Clare, Frank Jerningham, Peter Fabell, and Millicent.

Cla. Spite now hath done her worst; sister, be patient!
Jer. Forewarn'd poor Raymond's company! O heaven!
When the composure of weak frailty meet
Upon this mart of dirt, O then weak love
Must in her own unhappiness be silent,
And wink on all deformities.

Mil. 'Tis well:
Where's Raymond, brother? Where's my dear Mounchensey?
Would we might weep together and then part;
Our sighing parle would much ease my heart.
Fab. Sweet beauty, fold your sorrows in the thought
Of future reconcilement. Let your tears
Show you a woman; but be no farther spent
Than from the eyes; for, sweet, experience says
That love is firm that's flatter'd with delays.
Mil. Alas, sir, think you I shall e'er be his?
Fab. As sure as parting smiles on future bliss.
Yond comes my friend! See, he hath doted
So long upon your beauty, that your want
Will with a pale retirement waste his blood;
For in true love music doth sweetly dwell:
Sever'd, these less worlds bear within them hell.

Enter Raymond Mounchensey.

Ray. Harry and Frank, you are enjoined to wean
Your friendship from me; we must part; the breath
Of all advised corruption, pardon me!
Faith, I must say so; you may think I love you,
I breathe not rougher spite to sever us;
We'll meet by stealth, sweet friends, by stealth you twain;
Kisses are sweetest got with struggling pain.
Y. Jer. Our friendship dies not, Raymond.

Ray. Pardon me:
I am busied; I have lost my faculties,
And buried them in Millicent's clear eyes.
Mil. Alas, sweet love, what shall become of me?
I must to Cheston to the nunnery,
I shall ne'er see thee more.
Ray. How, sweet?
I 'll be thy votary, we 'll often meet:
This kiss divides us, and breathes soft adieu,—
This be a double charm to keep both true.
Fab. Have done: your fathers may chance spy your parting.
Refuse not you by any means, good sweetness,
To go unto the nunnery; far from hence
Must we beget your love's sweet happiness.
You shall not stay there long; your harder bed
Shall be more soft when nun and maid are dead.

Enter Bilbo.

Ray. Now, sirrah, what 's the matter?
Bil. Marry, you must to horse presently; that villanous old gouty churl, Sir Arthur Clare, longs till he be at the nunnery.
Y. Cla. How, sir?
Bil. O, I cry you mercy, he is your father, sir, indeed; but I am sure that there 's less affinity betwixt your two natures than there is between a broker and a cutpurse.

Ray. Bring my gelding, sirrah.

Bil. Well, nothing grieves me, but for the poor wench; she must now cry *vale* to lobster-pies, artichokes, and all such meats of mortality. Poor gentlewoman! the sign must not be in *Virgo* any longer with her, and that me grieves full well.

Poor Millicent
Must pray and repent:
O fatal wonder!
She 'll now be no fatter,
Love must not come at her,
Yet she shall be kept under.

[*Exit.*

Y. Jer. Farewell, dear Raymond.

Y. Cla. Friend, adieu.

Mil. Dear sweet,
No joy enjoys my heart till we next meet. [*Exeunt.*

Fab. Well, Raymond, now the tide of discontent
Beats in thy face; but, ere 't be long, the wind
Shall turn the flood. We must to Waltham Abbey,
And as fair Millicent in Cheston lives,
A most unwilling nun, so thou shalt there
Become a beardless novice; to what end,
Let time and future accidents declare:
Taste thou my sleights, thy love I 'll only share.

Ray. Turn friar? Come, my good counsellor, let 's go,
Yet that disguise will hardly shroud my woe.

[*Exeunt*

ACT III

SCENE I

Enter the Prioress of Cheston, with a nun or two, Sir Arthur Clare, Sir Ralph Jerningham, Henry and Frank, the Lady, and Bilbo, with Millicent.

L. Dor. Madam,
The love unto this holy sisterhood,
And our confirm'd opinion of your zeal,
Hath truly won us to bestow our child
Rather on this than any neighbouring cell.

Pri. Jesus' daughter, Mary's child,
Holy matron, woman mild,
For thee a mass shall still be said,
Every Sister drop a bead;
And those again succeeding them
For you shall sing a requiem.

Y. Jer. The wench is gone, Harry; she is no more a woman of this world. Mark her well, she looks like a nun already. What think'st on her? [*Aside.*

Y. Cla. By my faith, her face comes handsomely to't. But peace, let's hear the rest. [*Aside.*

Sir Ar. Madam, for a twelvemonth's approbation,

We mean to make this trial of our child.
Your care and our dear blessing, in meantime,
We pray, may prosper this intended work.

Pri. May your happy soul be blythe,
That so truly pay your tithe:
He who many children gave,
'Tis fit that He one child should have.
Then, fair virgin, hear my spell,
For I must your duty tell.

Mil. Good men and true, stand together, and hear your charge! [*Aside.*

Pri. First, a-mornings take your book,
The glass wherein yourself must look;
Your young thoughts, so proud and jolly,
Must be turned to motions holy;
For your busk, attires, and toys,
Have your thoughts on heavenly joys;
And for all your follies past
You must do penance, pray, and fast.

Bil. Let her take heed of fasting; and if ever she hurt herself with praying, I 'll ne'er trust beast. [*Aside.*

Mil. This goes hard, by 'r Lady! [*Aside.*

Pri. You shall ring the sacring bell,
Keep your hours, and toll your knell,
Rise at midnight to your matins,
Read your Psalter, sing your Latins,
And when your blood shall kindle pleasure
Scourge yourself in plenteous measure.

Mil. Worse and worse, by Saint Mary! [*Aside.*

Y. Jer. Sirrah Hal, how does she hold her countenance? Well, go thy ways, if ever you prove a nun, I'll build an Abbey. [*Aside.*

Y. Cla. She may be a nun; but if ever she prove an anchoress, I'll dig her grave with my nails. [*Aside.*

Y. Jer. To her again, mother! [*Aside.*

Y. Cla. Hold thine own, wench! [*Aside*

Pri. You must read the morning's mass,
You must creep unto the cross,
Put cold ashes on your head,
Have a hair-cloth for your bed.

Bil. She had rather have a man in her bed. [*Aside.*

Pri. Bid your beads, and tell your needs,
Your holy *aves*, and your creeds;
Holy maid, this must be done,
If you mean to live a nun.

Mil. The holy maid will be no nun. [*Aside.*

Sir Ar. Madam, we have some business of import,
And must be gone.
Will't please you take my wife into your closet,
Who further will acquaint you with my mind;
And so, good madam, for this time adieu.
[*Exeunt women.*

Sir Ralph. Well now, Frank Jerningham, how sayest thou?
To be brief,—
What wilt thou say for all this, if we two

Her father and myself, can bring about,
That we convert this nun to be a wife,
And thou the husband to this pretty nun?
How then, my lad? ha, Frank, it may be done.

Y. Cla. Ay, now it works.

Y. Jer. O God, sir, you amaze me at your words;
Think with yourself, sir, what a thing it were
To cause a recluse to remove her vow:
A maimed, contrite, and repentant soul,
Ever mortified with fasting and with prayer,
Whose thoughts, even as her eyes, are fix'd on heaven,
To draw a virgin, thus devour'd with zeal,
Back to the world: O impious deed!
Nor by the canon law can it be done
Without a dispensation from the Church;
Besides, she is so prone unto this life,
As she 'll even shriek to hear a husband nam'd.

Bil. Ay, a poor innocent she! Well, here's no knavery; he flouts the old fools to their teeth. [*Aside.*

Sir Ralph. Boy, I am glad to hear
Thou mak'st such scruple of that conscience;
And in a man so young as is yourself,
I promise you 'tis very seldom seen.
But Frank, this is a trick, a mere device,
A sleight plotted betwixt her father and myself,
To thrust Mounchensey's nose beside the cushion;
That, being thus debarr'd of all access,

Time yet may work him from her thoughts,
And give thee ample scope to thy desires.

Bil. A plague on you both for a couple of Jews! [*Aside.*

Y. Cla. How now, Frank, what say you to that? [*Aside to Frank.*

Y. Jer. Let me alone, I warrant thee. [*Aside to Harry.*
Sir, assur'd that this motion doth proceed
From your most kind and fatherly affection,
I do dispose my liking to your pleasure:
But for it is a matter of such moment
As holy marriage, I must crave thus much,
To have some conference with my ghostly father,
Friar Hildersham, here by, at Waltham Abbey,
To be absolv'd of things, that it is fit
None only but my confessor should know.

Sir Ralph. With all my heart. He is a reverend man; and to-morrow morning we will meet all at the Abbey, where by the opinion of that reverend man we will proceed; I like it passing well.
Till then we part, boy; ay, think of it; farewell!
A parent's care no mortal tongue can tell. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Enter Sir Arthur Clare, and Raymond Mounchensey, like a Friar.

Sir Ar. Holy young novice, I have told you now
My full intent, and do refer the rest

To your professed secrecy and care:
And see,
Our serious speech hath stolen upon the way,
That we are come unto the Abbey gate.
Because I know Mounchensey is a fox,
That craftily doth overlook my doings,
I'll not be seen, not I; tush, I have done,
I had a daughter, but she's now a nun.
Farewell, dear son, farewell. [*Exit.*

Ray. Fare you well!—Ay, you have done!
Your daughter, sir, shall not be long a nun.
O my rare tutor, never mortal brain
Plotted out such a mass of policy;
And my dear bosom is so great with laughter,
Begot by his simplicity and error,
My soul is fallen in labour with her joy.
O my true friends, Frank Jerningham and Clare,
Did you now know but how this jest takes fire—
That good Sir Arthur, thinking me a novice,
Had even pour'd himself into my bosom,
O, you would vent your spleens with tickling mirth!
But, Raymond, peace, and have an eye about,
For fear perhaps some of the nuns look out.
Peace and charity within,
Never touch'd with deadly sin;
I cast my holy water pure
On this wall and on this door,
That from evil shall defend,

And keep you from the ugly fiend:
Evil spirit, by night nor day,
Shall approach or come this way;
Elf nor fairy, by this grace,
Day nor night shall haunt this place.
Holy maidens! [*Knocks.*
[*Answer within.*] Who's that which knocks? ha, who is there?

Ray. Gentle nun, here is a friar.

Enter Nun.

Nun. A friar without, now Christ us save!
Holy man, what wouldst thou have?

Ray. Holy maid, I hither come
From Friar and Father Hildersham,
By the favour and the grace
Of the Prioress of this place
Amongst you all to visit one
That's come for approbation;
Before she was as now you are,
The daughter of Sir Arthur Clare.
But since she now became a nun,
Call'd Millicent of Edmonton.

Nun. Holy man, repose you there;
This news I'll to our Abbess bear,
To tell her what a man is sent,
And your message and intent.

Ray. Benedicite.
Nun. Benedicite. [*Exit.*
Ray. Do, my good plump wench; if all fall right,
I 'll make your sisterhood one less by night.
Now happy fortune speed this merry drift,
I like a wench comes roundly to her shrift.

Enter Lady and Millicent.

L. Dor. Have friars recourse then to the house of nuns?
Mil. Madam, it is the order of this place,
When any virgin comes for approbation,—
Lest that for fear or sinister practice
She should be forc'd to undergo this veil,
Which should proceed from conscience and devotion,—
A visitor is sent from Waltham House,
To take the true confession of the maid.
L. Dor. Is that the order? I commend it well:
You to your shrift, I 'll back unto the cell. [*Exit*
Ray. Life of my soul! bright angel!
Mil. What means the friar?
Ray. O Millicent, 'tis I.
Mil. My heart misgives me; I should know that voice
You? who are you? the Holy Virgin bless me!
Tell me your name: you shall, ere you confess me.
Ray. Mounchensey, thy true friend.
Mil. My Raymond, my dear heart!
t life, give leave to my distracted soul,

To wake a little from this swoon of joy.
By what means cam'st thou to assume this shape?

Ray. By means of Peter Fabell, my kind tutor,
Who in the habit of Friar Hildersham,
Frank Jerningham's old friend and confessor,
Plotted by Frank, by Fabell and myself,
And so delivered to Sir Arthur Clare,
Who brought me here unto the Abbey gate,
To be his nun-made daughter's visitor.

Mil. You are all sweet traitors to my poor old father.
O my dear life! I was a-dream'd to-night
That, as I was a-praying in mine Psalter,
There came a spirit unto me as I kneel'd,
And by his strong persuasions tempted me
To leave this nunnery: and methought
He came in the most glorious angel-shape,
That mortal eye did ever look upon.
Ha, thou art sure that spirit, for there's no form
Is in mine eye so glorious as thine own.

Ray. O thou idolatress, that dost this worship
To him whose likeness is but praise of thee!
Thou bright, unsetting star, which through this veil,
For very envy, mak'st the sun look pale!

Mil. Well, visitor, lest that perhaps my mother
Should think the friar too strict in his decrees,
I this confess to my sweet ghostly father:
If chaste pure love be sin, I must confess,
I have offended three years now with thee.

Ray. But do you yet repent you of the same?
Mil. I' faith, I cannot.
Ray. Nor will I absolve thee
Of that sweet sin, though it be venial;
Yet have the penance of a thousand kisses,
And I enjoin you to this pilgrimage:
That in the evening you bestow yourself
Here in the walk near to the willow ground,
Where I 'll be ready both with men and horse
To wait your coming, and convey you hence
Unto a lodge I have in Enfield Chase.
No more reply, if that you yield consent—
I see more eyes upon our stay are bent.
Mil. Sweet life, farewell! 'Tis done: let that suffice;
What my tongue fails, I send thee by mine eyes.
[*Exit.*

Enter Fabell, Clare, and Jerningham.

Y. Jer. Now, visitor, how does this new-made nun?
Y. Cla. Come, come, how does she, noble Capuchin?
Ray. She may be poor in spirit, but for the flesh,
'Tis fat and plump, boys. Ah, rogues, there is
A company of girls would turn you all friars.
Fab. But how, Mounchensey, how, lad, for the wench?
Ray. Zounds, lads, i' faith, I thank my holy habit,
I have confessed her, and the Lady Prioress
Hath given me ghostly counsel with her blessing.

And how say ye, boys,
If I be chose the weekly visitor?

Y. Cla. 'Sblood, she'll have ne'er a nun unbag'd to sing mass then.

Y. Jer. The Abbot of Waltham will have as many children to put to nurse as he has calves in the marsh.

Ray. Well, to be brief, the nun will soon at night turn tippet; if I can but devise to quit her cleanly of the nunnery, she is mine own.

Fab. But, sirrah Raymond,
What news of Peter Fabell at the house?

Ray. Tush, he's the only man; a necromancer and a conjurer that works for young Mounchensey altogether; and if it be not for Friar Benedick, that he can cross him by his learned skill, the wench is gone; Fabell will fetch her out by very magic.

Fab. Stands the wind there, boy? Keep them in that key,
The wench is ours before to-morrow day.
Well, Harry and Frank, as ye are gentlemen,
Stick to us close this once! You know your fathers
Have men and horse lie ready still at Cheston,
To watch the coast be clear, to scout about,
And have an eye unto Mounchensey's walks:
Therefore you two may hover thereabouts,
And no man will suspect you for the matter;
Be ready but to take her at our hands,
Leave us to scamble for her getting out.

Y. Jer. 'Sblood, if all Hertfordshire were at our heels,
We'll carry her away in spite of them.
Y. Cla. But whither, Raymond?
Ray. To Brian's upper lodge in Enfield Chase;
He is mine honest friend and a tall keeper;
I'll send my man unto him presently
T' acquaint him with your coming and intent.
Fab. Be brief and secret!
Ray. Soon at night remember
You bring your horses to the willow ground.
Y. Jer. 'Tis done; no more!
Y. Cla. We will not fail the hour.
My life and fortune now lies in your power.
Fab. About our business! Raymond, let's away!
Think of your hour; it draws well off the day.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

SCENE I

Enter Blague, Banks, Smug, and Sir John.

Host. Come, ye Hungarian pilchers, we are once more come under the *zona torrida* of the forest. Let's be resolute, let's fly to and again; and if the devil come, we'll put him to his interrogatories, and not budge a foot. What? 'Sfoot, I'll put fire into you, ye shall all three serve the good Duke of Norfolk.

Smug. Mine host, my bully, my precious consul, my noble Holofernes, I have been drunk i' thy house twenty times and ten; all's one for that: I was last night in the third heavens, my brain was poor, it had yeast in't; but now I am a man of action; is't not so, lad? 12

Banks. Why, now thou hast two of the liberal sciences about thee, wit and reason, thou may'st serve the Duke of Europe.

Smug. I will serve the Duke of Christendom, and do him more credit in his cellar than all the plate in his buttery; is't not so, lad?

Sir John. Mine host and Smug, stand there; Banks, you and your horse keep together; but lie close, show no tricks, for fear of the keeper. If we be scared, we'll meet in the church porch at Enfield.

Smug. Content, Sir John.

Banks. Smug, dost not thou remember the tree thou fell'st out of last night?

Smug. Tush, an't had been as high as the Abbey, I should ne'er have hurt myself; I have fallen into the river, coming home from Waltham, and 'scaped drowning.

Sir John. Come, sever, fear no spirits! We'll have a buck presently; we have watched later than this for a doe, mine host.

Host. Thou speak'st as true as velvet.

Sir John. Why then, come! Grass and hay, etc.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Clare, Jerningham, and Millicent.

Y. Cla. Frank Jerningham!

Y. Jer. Speak softly, rogue; how now?

Y. Cla. 'Sfoot, we shall lose our way, it's so dark; whereabouts are we?

Y. Jer. Why, man, at Potter's gate; the way lies right: hark! the clock strikes at Enfield; what's the hour?

Y. Cla. Ten, the bell says.

Y. Jer. A lie's in's throat, it was but eight when we set out of Cheston. Sir John and his sexton are at ale to-night, the clock runs at random.

Y. Cla. Nay, as sure as thou liv'st, the villanous vicar is abroad in the Chase this dark night: the stone priest steals more venison than half the country.

Y. Jer. Millicent, how dost thou?

Mil. Sir, very well.
I would to God we were at Brian's lodge.

Y. Cla. We shall anon; zounds, hark! what means this noise?

Y. Jer. Stay, I hear horsemen.

Y. Cla. I hear footmen too.

Y. Jer. Nay, then I have it: we have been discovered,
And we are followed by our fathers' men.

Mil. Brother and friend, alas, what shall we do?

Y. Cla. Sister, speak softly, or we are descried.
They are hard upon us, whatsoe'er they be;
Shadow yourself behind this brake of fern,
We'll get into the wood, and let them pass.

Enter Sir John, Blague, Smug, and Banks, one after another.

Sir John. Grass and hay! we are all mortal; the keeper's abroad, and there's an end.

Banks. Sir John!

Sir John. Neighbour Banks, what news?

Banks. Zwounds, Sir John, the keepers are abroad; I was hard by 'em.

Sir John. Grass and hay! where's mine host Blague?

Host. Here, Metropolitan. The Philistines are upon us, be silent; let us serve the good Duke of Norfolk. But where is Smug?

Smug. Here; a pox on ye all, dogs; I have killed the greatest buck in Brian's walk. Shift for yourselves, all the keepers are up. Let's meet in Enfield church porch; away, we are all taken else.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Brian, with Ralph, his man, and his hound.

Bri. Ralph, hear'st thou any stirring?

Ralph. I heard one speak here hard by, in the bottom. Peace, master, speak low; zounds, if I did not hear a bow go off, and the buck bray, I never heard deer in my life.

Bri. When went your fellows out into their walks?

Ralph. An hour ago.

Bri. 'Slife, is there stealers abroad, and they cannot hear
Of them: where the devil are my men to-night?
Sirrah, go up the wind towards Buckley's lodge!
I'll cast about the bottom with my hound,
And I will meet thee under coney oak.

Ralph. I will, sir.

Bri. How now? by the mass, my hound stays upon something;
Hark, hark, Bowman, hark, hark, there!
Mil. Brother, Frank Jerningham, brother Clare!
Bri. Peace; that's a woman's voice! Stand! who's there?
Stand, or I'll shoot.
Mil. O Lord! hold your hands, I mean no harm, sir.
Bri. Speak, who are you?
Mil. I am a maid, sir; who? Master Brian?
Bri. The very same; sure, I should know her voice;
Mistress Millicent?
Mil. Ay, it is I, sir.
Bri. God for his passion! what make you here alone?
I looked for you at my lodge an hour ago.
What means your company to leave you thus?
Who brought you hither?
Mil. My brother, sir, and Master Jerningham,
Who, hearing folks about us in the Chase,
Feared it had been Sir Ralph and my father,
Who had pursued us, thus dispersed ourselves,
Till they were past us.
Bri. But where be they?
Mil. They be not far off, here about the grove.

Enter Clare and Jerningham.

Y. Cla. Be not afraid! man, I heard Brian's tongue,
That's certain.

Y. Jer. Call softly for your sister.
Y. Cla. Millicent!
Mil. Ay, brother, here.
Bri. Master Clare!
Y. Cla. I told you it was Brian.
Bri. Who's that? Master Jerningham? You are a couple of hot-shots; does a man commit his wench to you, to put her to grass at this time of night?
Y. Jer. We heard a noise about here in the Chase,
And fearing that our fathers had pursued us,
Severed ourselves.
Y. Cla. Brian, how happ'd'st thou on her?
Bri. Seeking for stealers are abroad to-night,
My hound stay'd on her, and so found her out.
Y. Cla. They were these stealers that affrighted us;
I was hard upon them, when they hors'd their deer,
And I perceive they took me for a keeper.
Bri. Which way took they?
Y. Jer. Towards Enfield.
Bri. A plague upon't, that's that damned priest, and Blague of the George—he that serves the good Duke of Norfolk.

A noise within: Follow, follow, follow.

Y. Cla. Peace, that's my father's voice.
Bri. Zounds, you suspected them, and now they are here indeed.
Mil. Alas, what shall we do?

Bri. If you go to the lodge, you are surely taken;
Strike down the wood to Enfield presently,
And if Mounchensey come, I 'll send him t' ye.
Let me alone to bustle with your fathers;
I warrant you that I will keep them play
Till you have quit the Chase; away, away!
[*Exeunt all but Brian.*
Who 's there?

Enter the Knights.

Sir Ralph. In the king's name, pursue the ravisher!
Bri. Stand, or I 'll shoot.
Sir Ar. Who 's there?
Bri. I am the keeper that do charge you stand;
You have stolen my deer.
Sir Ar. We stolen thy deer? we do pursue a thief.
Bri. You are arrant thieves, and ye have stolen my deer.
Sir Ralph. We are knights; Sir Arthur Clare, and Sir Ralph Jerningham.
Bri. The more your shame, that knights should be such thieves.
Sir Ar. Who or what art thou?
Bri. My name is Brian, keeper of this walk.
Sir Ralph. O Brian, a villain!
Thou hast receiv'd my daughter to thy lodge.
Bri. You have stolen the best deer in my walk to-night.
My deer!

Sir Ar. My daughter!
Stop not my way!
Bri. What make you in my walk?
You have stolen the best buck in my walk to-night.
Sir Ar. My daughter!
Bri. My deer!
Sir Ar. Where is Mounchensey?
Bri. Where's my buck?
Sir Ar. I will complain me of thee to the king.
Bri. I 'll complain unto the king you spoil his game:
'Tis strange that men of your account and calling
Will offer it! 171
I tell you true, Sir Arthur and Sir Ralph,
That none but you have only spoiled my game.
Sir Ar. I charge you, stop us not!
Bri. I charge you both ye get out of my ground!
Is this a time for such as you,
Men of your place and of your gravity,
To be abroad a-thieving? 'Tis a shame;
And, afore God, if I had shot at you,
I had served you well enough. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Enter Banks the Miller, wet on his legs.

Banks. 'Sfoot, here's a dark night indeed! I think I have been in fifteen ditches between this and the forest. Soft, here's Enfield Church: I am so wet

with climbing over into an orchard for to steal some filberts. Well, here I 'll sit in the church porch, and wait for the rest of my consort.

Enter the Sexton.

Sex. Here's a sky as black as Lucifer, God bless us! Here was goodman Theophilus buried; he was the best nutcracker that ever dwelt in Enfield. Well, 'tis nine o'clock, 'tis time to ring curfew. Lord bless us, what a white thing is that in the church porch! O Lord, my legs are too weak for my body, my hair is too stiff for my nightcap, my heart fails; this is the ghost of Theophilus. O Lord, it follows me! I cannot say my prayers, an one would give me a thousand pound. Good spirit, I have bowled and drunk and followed the hounds with you a thousand times, though I have not the spirit now to deal with you. O Lord! 19

Enter Priest.

Sir John. Grass and hay! we are all mortal. Who's there?

Sex. We are grass and hay indeed; I know you to be Master Parson by your phrase.

Sir John. Sexton!

Sex. Ay, sir!

Sir John. For mortality's sake, what's the matter?

Sex. O Lord, I am a man of another element; Master Theophilus' ghost is in the church porch. There was a hundred cats, all fire, dancing here even now, and they clomb up to the top of the steeple; I'll not into the belfry for a world.

Sir John. O good Solomon; I have been about a deed of darkness to-night: O Lord, I saw fifteen spirits in the forest like white bulls; if I lie, I am an arrant thief: mortality haunts us—grass and hay! the devil's at our heels, and let's hence to the parsonage.

[*Exeunt.*

[*The Miller comes out very softly.*

Banks. What noise was that? 'Tis the watch, sure; that villanous unlucky rogue, Smug, is ta'en, upon my life; and then all our villany comes out; I heard one cry, sure.

Enter Host Blague.

Host. If I go steal any more venison, I am a paradox! 'Sfoot, I can scarcely bear the sin of my flesh in the day, 'tis so heavy; if I turn not honest and serve the good Duke of Norfolk, as true mareterraneum skinker should do, let me never look higher than the element of a constable.

Banks. By the Lord, there are some watchmen; I hear them name Master Constable; I would to God my mill were an eunuch, and wanted her stones, so I were hence

Host. Who's there?

Banks. 'Tis the constable, by this light; I'll steal hence, and if I can meet mine host Blague, I'll tell how Smug is ta'en, and will him to look to himself.

[*Exit.*

Host. What the devil is that white thing? this same is a churchyard, and I have heard that ghosts and villanous goblins have been seen here.

Enter Sexton and Priest.

Sir John. Grass and hay! O that I could conjure! We saw a spirit here in the churchyard; and in the fallow field there's the devil with a man's body upon his back in a white sheet.

Sex. It may be a woman's body, Sir John.

Sir John. If she be a woman, the sheets damn her; Lord bless us, what a night of mortality is this!

Host. Priest!

Sir John. Mine host!

Host. Did you not see a spirit all in white cross you at the stile?

Sex. O no, mine host: but there sat one in the porch; I have not breath enough left to bless me from the devil.

Host. Who's that?

Sir John. The sexton, almost frighted out of his wits. Did you see Banks or Smug?

Host. No, they are gone to Waltham, sure. I would

fain hence; come, let's to my house: I'll r
serve the Duke of Norfolk in this fashion a
whilst I breathe. If the devil be amongst us
time to hoist sail, and cry roomer. Keep togetl
sexton, thou art secret. What! let's be com
able one to another.

Sir John. We are all mortal, mine host.

Host. True; and I'll serve God in the night here
afore the Duke of Norfolk. [*Ex*

ACT V

SCENE I

Enter Sir Arthur Clare and Sir Ralph Jerningham, trussing their points as new up.

Sir Ralph. Good morrow, gentle knight.
A happy day after your short night's rest!
Sir Ar. Ha, ha, Sir Ralph, stirring so soon indeed?
By 'r Lady, sir, rest would have done right well;
Our riding late last night has made me drowsy.
Go to, go to, those days are gone with us.
Sir Ralph. Sir Arthur, Sir Arthur, care go with those days,
Let 'em even go together, let 'em go!
'Tis time, i' faith, that we were in our graves,
When children leave obedience to their parents,
When there 's no fear of God, no care, no duty.
Well, well, nay, nay, it shall not do, it shall not;
No, Mounchensey, thou 'lt hear on 't, thou shalt,
Thou shalt i' faith!
I 'll hang thy son, if there be law in England.
A man's child ravish'd from a nunnery!

This is rare!
Well, well, there's one gone to Friar Hildersham.

Sir Ar. Nay, gentle knight, do not vex thus, it will but hurt your health. You cannot grieve more than I do, but to what end? But hark you, Sir Ralph, I was about to say something—it makes no matter. But hark you in your ear: the Friar's a knave; but God forgive me, a man cannot tell neither; 'sfoot, I am so out of patience, I know not what to say.

Sir Ralph. There's one went for the Friar an hour ago. Comes he not yet? 'Sfoot, if I do find knavery under's cowl, I'll tickle him, I'll firk him. Here, here, he's here, he's here. Good morrow, Friar; good morrow, gentle Friar.

Enter Hildersham.

Sir Ar. Good morrow, Father Hildersham, good morrow.

Hil. Good morrow, reverend knights, unto you both.

Sir Ar. Father, how now? you hear how matters go;
I am undone, my child is cast away.
You did your best, at least I think the best;
But we are all cross'd; flatly, all is dash'd.

Hil. Alas, good knights! how might the matter be?
Let me understand your grief for charity.

Sir Ar. Who does not understand my griefs? Alas, alas!
And yet ye do not! Will the Church permit

A nun in approbation of her habit
To be ravished?

Hil. A holy woman, benedicite!
Now God forfend that any should presume
To touch the sister of a holy house.

Sir Ar. Jesus deliver me!

Sir Ralph. Why, Millicent, the daughter of this knight,
Is out of Cheston taken the last night.

Hil. Was that fair maiden late become a nun? 49

Sir Ralph. Was she, quotha? Knavery, knavery, knavery; I smell it, I smell it, i' faith; is the wind in that door? is it even so? dost thou ask me that now?

Hil. It is the first time that I e'er heard of it.

Sir Ar. That's very strange.

Sir Ralph. Why, tell me, Friar, tell me; thou art counted a holy man; do not play the hypocrite with me, nor bear with me. I cannot dissemble. Did I aught but by thy own consent, by thy allowance, nay, further, by thy warrant? 60

Hil. Why, reverend Knight——

Sir Ralph. Unreverend Friar——

Hil. Nay, then give me leave, sir, to depart in quiet; I had hoped you had sent for me to some other end.

Sir Ar. Nay, stay, good Friar; if anything hath happ'd
About this matter in thy love to us,
That thy strict order cannot justify,
Admit it be so, we will cover it.

Take no care, man:
Disclaim not yet thy counsel and advice,
The wisest man that is may be o'erreached.
Hil. Sir Arthur, by my order and my faith,
I know not what you mean.
Sir Ralph. By your order and your faith?
This is most strange of all. Why, tell me, Friar,
Are not you confessor to my son Frank?
Hil. Yes, that I am.
Sir Ralph. And did not this good knight here and myself
Confess with you, being his ghostly Father,
To deal with him about th' unbanded marriage
Betwixt him and that fair young Millicent?
Hil. I never heard of any match intended.
Sir Ar. Did not we break our minds that very time,
That our device of making her a nun
Was but a colour and a very plot
To put by young Mounchensey? Is 't not true?
Hil. The more I strive to know what you should mean,
The less I understand you.
Sir Ralph. Did not you tell us still how Peter Fabell
At length would cross us, if we took not heed?
Hil. I have heard of one that is a great magician,
But he 's about the university.
Sir Ralph. Did not you send your novice Benedick
To persuade the girl to leave Mounchensey's love,
To cross that Peter Fabell in his art,
And to that purpose made him visitor?

Hil. I never sent my novice from the house,
Nor have we made our visitation yet.
Sir Ar. Never sent him? Nay, did he not go?
And did not I direct him to the house,
And confer with him by the way? and did he not
Tell me what charge he had received from you,
Word by word, as I requested at your hands?
Hil. That you shall know; he came along with me,
And stays without. Come hither, Benedick!

Enter Benedick.

Young Benedick, were you e'er sent by me
To Cheston Nunnery for a visitor?
Ben. Never, sir, truly.
Sir Ralph. Stranger than all the rest!
Sir Ar. Did not I direct you to the house? Confer with you
From Waltham Abbey unto Cheston wall?
Ben. I never saw you, sir, before this hour!
Sir Ralph. The devil thou didst not! Ho, chamberlain!

Enter Chamberlain.

Cham. Anon, anon.
Sir Ralph. Call mine host Blague hither!
Cham. I will send one over to see if he be up; I think he be scarce stirring yet.

Sir Ralph. Why, knave, didst thou not tell me an hour ago mine host was up?

Cham. Ay, sir, my master's up.

Sir Ralph. You knave, is a up, and is a not up? Dost thou mock me? 121

Cham. Ay, sir, my master is up; but I think Master Blague indeed be not stirring.

Sir Ralph. Why, who's thy master? is not the master of the house thy master?

Cham. Yes, sir; but Master Blague dwells over the way.

Sir Ar. Is not this the George? Before God, there's some villany in this.

Cham. 'Sfoot, our sign's remov'd; this is strange!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Enter Blague, trussing his points.

Host. Chamberlain, speak up to the new lodgings, bid Nell look well to the baked meats!

Enter Sir Arthur and Sir Ralph.

How now, my old jennets balk my house, my castle, lie in Waltham all night, and not under the canopy of your host Blague's house?

Sir Ar. Mine host, mine host, we lay all night at the

George in Waltham; but whether the George be your fee-simple or no, 'tis a doubtful question. Look upon your sign!

Host. Body of Saint George, this is mine overthwart neighbour hath done this to seduce my blind customers. I'll tickle his catastrophe for this; if I do not indict him at next assizes for burglary, let me die of the yellows; for I see 'tis no boot in these days to serve the good Duke of Norfolk. The villanous world is turned manger; one jade deceives another, and your ostler plays his part commonly for the fourth share. Have we comedies in hand, you whoreson, villanous male London lecher?

Sir Ar. Mine host, we have had the moiling'st night of it that ever we had in our lives.

Host. Is't certain?

Sir Ralph. We have been in the forest all night almost.

Host. 'Sfoot, how did I miss you? Heart, I was a-stealing a buck there.

Sir Ar. A plague on you; we were stayed for you.

Host. Were you, my noble Romans? Why, you shall share; the venison is a-footing. *Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus*; that is, there's a good breakfast provided for a marriage that's in my house this morning.

Sir Ar. A marriage, mine host?

Host. 'Tis firm, 'tis done. We'll show you a precedent i' the civil law for't.

Sir Ralph. How? married?

Host. Leave tricks and admiration. There's a cleanly pair of sheets in the bed in the orchard chamber, and they shall lie there. What? I'll do it; I'll serve the good Duke of Norfolk.

Sir Ar. Thou shalt repent this, Blague.

Sir Ralph. If any law in England will make thee smart for this, expect it with all severity.

Host. I renounce your defiance, if you parle so roughly. I'll barracado my gates against you. Stand fair, bully; Priest, come off from the rearward! What can you say now? 'Twas done in my house; I have shelter i'th' court for't. D'ye see yon bay window? I serve the good Duke of Norfolk, and 'tis his lodging. Storm, I care not, serving the good Duke of Norfolk. Thou art an actor in this, and thou shalt carry fire in thy face eternally.

Enter Smug, Mounchensey, Harry Clare, and Millicent.

Smug. Fire, 'sblood, there's no fire in England like your Trinidado sack. Is any man here humorous? We stole the venison, and we'll justify it: say you now!

Host. In good sooth, Smug, there's more sack on the fire, Smug.

Smug. I do not take any exceptions against your sack;

but if you'll lend me a pike-staff, I'll cudgel them all hence, by this hand.

Host. I say thou shalt into the cellar.

Smug. 'Sfoot, mine host, shall's not grapple? Pray, pray you; I could fight now for all the world like a cockatrice's egg. Shall's not serve the Duke of Norfolk? [*Exit.*

Host. In, skipper, in!

Sir Ar. Sirrah, hath young Mounchensey married your sister?

Y. Cla. 'Tis certain, sir; here's the priest that coupled them, the parties joined, and the honest witness that cried Amen.

Ray. Sir Arthur Clare, my new created father,
I beseech you, hear me.

Sir Ar. Sir, sir, you are a foolish boy; you have done that you cannot answer; I dare be bold to seize her from you; for she's a professed nun.

Mil. With pardon, sir, that name is quite undone;
This true love knot cancels both maid and nun.
When first you told me I should act that part,
How cold and bloody it crept o'er my heart!
To Cheston with a smiling brow I went;
But yet, dear sir, it was to this intent,
That my sweet Raymond might find better means
To steal me thence. In brief, disguised he came,
Like novice to old Father Hildersham:

His tutor here did act that cunning part,
And in our love hath joined much wit to art.

Sir Ar. Is't even so?

Mil. With pardon therefore we entreat your smiles;
Love, thwarted, turns itself to thousand wiles.

Sir Ar. Young Master Jerningham, were you an actor
In your own love's abuse?

Y. Jer. My thoughts, good sir,
Did labour seriously unto this end,
To wrong myself, ere I 'd abuse my friend.

Host. He speaks like a bachelor of music, all in numbers. Knights, if I had known you would have let this covey of partridges sit thus long upon their knees under my sign-post, I would have spread my door with old coverlids.

Sir Ar. Well, sir, for this your sign was removed, was it?

Host. Faith, we followed the directions of the devil, Master Peter Fabell; and Smug, Lord bless us! could never stand upright since.

Sir Ar. You, sir, 'twas you was his minister that married them?

Sir John. Sir, to prove myself an honest man, being that I was last night in the forest stealing venison —now, sir, to have you stand my friend, if that matter shou'd be called in question, I married your daughter to this worthy gentleman.

Sir Ar. I may chance to requite you, and make your neck crack for't.

Sir John. If you do, I am as resolute as my neighbour vicar of Waltham Abbey; ahem, grass and hay! we are all mortal; let's live till we be hang'd, mine host, and be merry; and there's an end.

Enter Fabell.

Fab. Now, knights, I enter; now my part begins.
To end this difference, know, at first I knew
What you intended, ere your love took flight
From old Mounchensey; you, Sir Arthur Clare,
Were minded to have married this sweet beauty
To young Frank Jerningham; to cross which match,
I used some pretty sleights; but I protest
Such as but sat upon the skirts of art;
No conjurations, nor such weighty spells
As tie the soul to their performancy.
These for his love, who once was my dear pupil,
Have I effected. Now, methinks, 'tis strange
That you, being old in wisdom, should thus knit
Your forehead on this match, since reason fails;
No law can curb the lover's rash attempt;
Years, in resisting this, are sadly spent.
Smile, then, upon your daughter and kind son,
And let our toil to future ages prove,
The Devil of Edmonton did good in love.
Sir Ar. Well, 'tis in vain to cross the providence:

Dear son, I take thee up into my heart;
Rise, daughter; this is a kind father's part.

Host. Why, Sir John, send for Spindle's noise, presently: ha, ere't be night, I'll serve the good Duke of Norfolk.

Sir John. Grass and hay! mine host, let's live till we die, and be merry; and there's an end.

Sir Ar. What, is breakfast ready, mine host?

Host. 'Tis, my little Hebrew.

Sir Ar. Sirrah, ride straight to Cheston Nunnery,
Fetch thence my lady; the house, I know,
By this time misses their young votary.
Come, knights, let's in!

Bil. I will go to horse presently, sir.—A plague a my lady, I shall miss a good breakfast. Smug, how chance you cut so plaguily behind, Smug?

Smug. Stand away, I'll founder you else.

Bil. Farewell, Smug, thou art in another element.

Smug. I will be by and by; I will be Saint George again.

Sir Ar. Take heed the fellow do not hurt himself.

Sir Ralph. Did we not last night find two St. Georges here?

Fab. Yes, knights, this martialist was one of them.

Y. Cla. Then thus conclude your night of merriment!

[*Exeunt omnes.*

GLOSSARY

A, he; IV. i. 43; V. i. 120. Cf. *Henry V.*, II. iii. 16.

AFFECTED, inclined, disposed to like; I. ii. 38.

A-FOOTING, on the way, in preparation; V. ii. 28.

AND, an, if; II. i. 2; IV. ii. 15.

ART, magic; Ind. 76; I. ii. 55; iii. 135; V. ii. 124.

ATTOURNMENT, in law, an assignation or transference, whether of property or allegiance; I. ii. 21.

BALK, shy at, avoid; V. ii. 3. Murray's *Dictionary* quotes from Bishop Hall: 'Jericho was in his way from Galilee to Jerusalem: he balks it not, though it were outwardly accursed.'

BOOT, avail; V. ii. 14.

BOSONIANS, needy ones, beggars. Cf. 2 *Henry IV.*, v. iii. 112. 'The word comes from the Italian *bisogno*, need, want' (Warnke and Proescholdt).

BRANGLED, confused, rendered uncertain; a phonetic variant of *brangle*, from Fr. *branler*, to shake (Murray's *Dictionary*); II. ii. 6.

BREAK, open, disclose; V. i. 83.

BRINED, briny; I. iii. 23.

BUSK, the wood or whalebone in the corset, and hence the corset itself; III. i. 32.

CANE-TOBACCO, cigars; I. i. 70. Murray's *Dictionary* shows that the word *cane* was applied to anything cylindrical in shape.

CANVASADOES, another form of canvass, examination; I. i. 38.

CATASTROPHE, tail (burlesque); II. i. 8; V. ii. 12. Cf. 2 *Henry IV.*, ii. i. 58.

COLOUR, disguise; I. iii. 77; V. i. 85.

CONJURE, expel evil spirits; IV. ii. 58.

CONSORT, band, company; II. i. 50; IV. ii. 6. Cf. *King Lear*, II. i. 97.

CORRESPONDENT, suitable, I. i. 10; agreeable to inclination, II. i. 63. In both cases the word is used by the host, and has to be interpreted by the context.

CROSS, to thwart; I. iii. 27. Cf. *Julius Cæsar*, v. i. 19.

CUT, n., a common horse; I. iii. 140. *See* note.

CUT, v., strike sharply; V. ii. 152.

DISCONTINUANCE, break, delay; I. ii. 20. There is a reference to the legal use of the word, a discontinuance of possession or of plea, necessitating a fresh process or a new writ to take it up again.

DOSSERS, panniers, baskets carried on the back; I. iii. 141: from the Latin *dorsum*. Cf. Chaucer, *Hous of Fame*, 1940.

DOWAGE, dowry; I. iii. 7.
DRIFT, intention, purpose; III. ii. 59. Cf. *Hamlet*, II. i. 37.
DUMPS, melancholy airs; I. iii. 31. Cf. *Much Ado*, II. iii. 66.

FADGE, go on, proceed; II. ii. 81. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, II. ii. 31.
FELLOWS, companions; IV. i. 79.
FIRK, beat; v. i. 28. Cf. *Henry V.*, IV. iv. 28.
FROLIC, adj., joyful; I. ii. 49. Cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. i. 376; Milton, *L'Allegro*, 18.

GEAR, matter; I. iii. 59. Cf. *Richard III.*, I. iv. 150.
GOGMAGOGS, giants; II. i. 68. This use of the word is, as Warnke and Proescholdt point out, suggested by the statues of Gog and Magog in the Guildhall, London.

HABIT, garb; III. ii. 83, 128; v. i. 41.
HANDFUL, a palm, four inches; II. ii. 86. Cf. *Hudibras*—

'Of the lower end two handful
It had devoured, it was so manful.'

HOLLOWNESS, treachery; suggested as a title to Coreb by Your Holiness, applied to the Pope. Induction, 62.
HOODMAN-BLIND, blind-man's-buff; I. iii. 52.
HOT-SHOTS; IV. i. 117. Nares says that hot-shots 'appear to have been a class of soldiers, perhaps skirmishers.'
HUGGER-MUGGER, secrecy; I. iii. 59. Cf. *Hamlet*, IV. v. 81.
HUNGARIANS, hungry ones, II. i. 61; freebooters, IV. i. 1. Cf. *Merry Wives of Windsor*, I. iii. 19.
HUSWIFE, hussy (to a maiden); II. ii. 76.

INTERROGATORIES; questions, I. i. 38; IV. i. 4. There is a reference likewise to the legal use of the word, illustrated in the *Merchant of Venice*, v. i. 298.

JOINTURE, property settled on a woman in consideration of marriage; I. iii. 7. The expression in the text is tautologous, *jointure* simply repeating the idea in *dowage*.

LATINS, Latin prayers; III. i. 42.
LEAVE, abandon; v. i. 10; 94.
LIST, desire; I. iii. 94. The word is usually a verb, but in *Othello*, II. i. 104, as here, it is a substantive.

MAKE, do; IV. i. 98. Cf. *As You Like It*, I. i. 26.
METROPOLITAN, the president of a body of bishops, an archbishop; humorously used by the host of the priest; IV. i. 67.
MOILING'ST, most laborious; v. ii. 20.

NOISE, a company of musicians; v. ii. 139. Cf. 2 *Henry IV.*, II. iv. 11.

OVERTHWART, across the way; v. ii. 10.

PARLE, conversation; II. iii. 9. Cf. *Hamlet*, I. i. 62, where the 'parle' is an angry one. In the present play, v. ii. 43, the word is a verb.
PASSION, grief; I. ii. 44.
PILCHER, one who wears a pilch or garment of fur; IV. i. 1. *See* note.
PRETEND, design; I. iii. 132. Cf. *Macbeth*, II. iv. 24.

QUEAN, wench; II. ii. 11.
QUICK, alive; I. i. 89.

RELEASE, in law, remission of claim, acquittance; I. ii. 21.

ROOMER, an old sea-term; *to cry roomer* means to give the order to tack about before the wind; IV. ii. 79.

SAFEGUARDS, outer petticoats to cover and protect inner and better garments in travelling; I. i. stage direction.

SCAMBLE, bustle, struggle; derived by Skeat from *ex, campus*; III. ii. 157. Cf. *King John*, IV. iii. 146.

SEA-CARD, compass; I. ii. 22.

SHALL'S, shall we; I. ii. 45; v. ii. 62. Cf. Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*, 215.

SKEINS (Irish), knives; II. ii. 53.

SKINKER, tapster; IV. ii. 45. Cf. 1 *Henry IV.*, II. iv. 22.

SKIPPER, 'a thoughtless young fellow' (Warnke and Proescholdt); v. ii. 66. Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, II. i. 331.

SLUBBER, spoil; I. iii. 84. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*; II. viii. 39.

SOARS, soaring flights; II. ii. 56.

SPRINGS, springalls; I. iii. 87. Cf. Spenser, *Muiopotmos*:

> 'The other Spring
> A burning Teade above his head did move.'

STAYED, stopped; v. ii. 26.

STAYS UPON, stands at, scents; IV. i. 87, 123.

STILL, constantly; v. i. 89.

STORM, be passionate; v. ii. 49.

TAKING, agitation; II. i. 42. Cf. *Merry Wives*, III. iii. 158.

TALL, sturdy; III. ii. 162.

TARTARIAN, a stroller or gipsy; I. i. 10. *Cf.* 'A Bohemian-Tartar,' *Merry Wives*; IV. v. 18.

TOYS, trifles; III. i. 32.

UNBAG'D, not pregnant; III. ii. 133.

UNBANDED, not yet settled, merely talked of; v. i. 80. Warnke and Proescholdt unnecessarily conjecture *intended* against all the previous editions.

WASTE, waster, destroyer; I. i. 6.

WILL, order; I. i. 16; IV. ii. 54.

YELLOWS, jaundice, properly in horses; v. ii. 14.

NOTES

PROLOGUE.—In the earlier editions the play is not divided into acts and scenes. I have adopted the divisions of Warnke and Proescholdt.

5. *We ring this round*; we encircle this theatre. The interior of the Globe Theatre is referred to by Shakespeare in *Henry V.*, Prologue 13, as 'this wooden O.'

19. *His monument.* Weever in his *Funeral Monuments* speaks of a monument in Edmonton Church exhibited as Fabell's, but adds that it was without inscription.

36. *Guarded with these sable sleights*; protected by the dark devices of magic.

INDUCTION. 16. *This the hour.* See for this contraction Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*, 461.

32. *The date of thy command*; the period for which Fabell had bought the services of the devil.

42 *sqq.* The sense is: O that this soul, so dear bought by the Redeemer, should, by the pride of knowledge alone, wherein a man seems so contemptible in the eyes of higher powers, lead him down to hell.

79. *Phaetonic flames.* The expression seems meaningless if we take the name Phaeton as referring to the well-known classical story. But it is to be remembered that in post-Homeric writers Phaethon was also a name for Helios, and that in Homer himself it was an epithet of the sun-god. The passage would therefore mean that time on earth comes to an end, unlike the flames of the sun,

ch burn for ever.

1. i. *Stage direction.* *Blague*; the name, from the French *blague*, indicates the braggart character of the host.

1. i. 4. *It hath none of the four elements in it.* The host talks boastful nonsense. The room is not made of ordinary materials, but constructed out of the centre or core of things. *Correspondent*, below (10), is similarly used for its fine sound.

1. i. 31. *Top and top-gallant*; under all sail, at full speed.

1. i. 44. *Tend my good.* This, the reading of the editions of 1608 and 1617, is preferable to the commoner reading, *tend to.* The use of *tend* in this sense without *to* is rare, but cf. 2 *Henry VI.*, 1. i. 198. Here and in a few other places where it seemed necessary for clearness, I have introduced the stage direction, *Aside.*

1. i. 58. *But there are crosses, wife.* 'Clare first uses *crosses* in the sense of disappointment, vexation; in order to avert Millicent's attention, he then speaks of crosses in the proper sense of the word, and gives his whole speech such an obscure and unintelligible turn' that Millicent is puzzled (Warnke and Proescholdt). The pious were accustomed to stop for prayer at places where crosses had been set up. Cheston is now Cheshunt in Hertfordshire.

1. i. 71. *His hawks devour*, etc. This passage is hopelessly corrupt. The reading in the text is that of Hazlitt. Warnke and Proescholdt, convinced with reason that it does not hit the true meaning, and unable to offer any suggestion, revert to the unintelligible reading of the old editions:—

> 'His hawkes deuoure his fattest dogs, whilst simple,
> His leanest curres eate his hounds carrion.'

Hazlitt's reading has the advantage of giving a meaning, though an unsatisfactory one.

1. i. 76. *All's naught*; all is ended, he is ruined.

1. i. 78. *You'll see a flight, wife, shortly of his land*; you will soon see his land sold to pay his debts.

I. ii. 1. *Ostlers, you knaves and commanders*, etc. The host's words must not be pressed too hard for a meaning; but there seems to be a burlesque reference to the 'Knights Commanders' of a military order.

I. ii. 5. *Via*, used to quicken the attendants and make them bustle about. Cf. *Merchant of Venice*, II. ii. 9.

I. ii. 7. *Knights of the subsidy*; mere knights of the shire, knights whose business it is to vote money, not men of the old warlike class. It is well known that the grants of Parliament in the age of Elizabeth were given in 'subsidies.'

I. ii. 12. Without pressing the host's nonsense too hard, we may probably detect in *Giberalters* a coinage from 'jibbing' horses; and the blowing wind in the calves is a reference to the tricks of trade whereby a poor animal is made to pass for one in good condition.

I. ii. 18. *Your only blade*; a reference to the Bilboa blades suggested by the speaker's name.

I. ii. 20. *Discontinuance, releases, or attournment.* The use of legal terms is a point of resemblance between this play and the plays of Shakespeare. Here *discontinuance* is the significant word, the other two being due to the overflow of the host's learning. *See* Glossary

I. ii. 24. *My soldier of St Quentin's.* An English force under the Earl of Pembroke was present, not at the battle of St Quentin's, but at the subsequent storming of the town, 1557.

I. ii. 25. *I have Charles' wain below*; wine as bright as the constellation of *Ursa Major*. The astronomical comparison sets the host off to another constellation, and the thought of the Crab reminds him that a bad or stale crab is luminous in the dark. Cf. Dickens, *Christmas Carol*, Stave I: 'It was not in impenetrable shadow as the other objects in the yard were, but had a dismal light about it, like a bad lobster in a dark cellar.'

I. ii. 28. *Cooper's Dictionary*; a *Thesaurus Linguæ Romanæ et Britannicæ* published in 1565. There is an obvious play upon the

word *Cooper*. The pronoun *your* is colloquial. Cf. *Hamlet*, v. i. 167.

I. iii. 4. *My Clare*; used in contemptuous familiarity. A few lines before Sir Arthur Clare does not know Fabell.

I. iii. 9. *In hand To strike a match*; on the point of striking.

I. iii. 38 *sqq*. The sense is: 'Had these words been spoken by any other, they would have brought no comfort. Spoken by you, they have some power over me; and yet—had any one else spoken, I might have believed him; but I cannot believe that you will ever surrender Millicent.' I have printed the passage with a dash after 'yet being from thee.' Raymond begins to say, 'yet being from thee I cannot believe them'; but he goes on, 'I might have believed them from any other man.' The grammar of 42 is somewhat loose. The pronoun 'they' strictly refers to 'that word,' but the phrase 'northern winds' suggests the plural.

I. iii. 49 *sqq*. Lines 50-52 are parenthetical, and describe the present melancholy state of Raymond in love. Line 53 takes up line 49, and describes what young Clare would have Raymond to be. The change of gender is due to a confusion between the general idea of love as feminine, and its personification in the god Cupid. For the use of *me* in 49, and again in 54, see Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*, 220. Compare also II. ii. 86.

I. iii. 52. *Shot at hoodman-blind*; shot with eyes blindfolded, like one playing the game of blind-man's buff. Cf. *Hamlet*, III. iv. 77.

I. iii. 65. *Do I bend in the hams?* 'Most weak hams' are among Hamlet's signs of old age, II. ii. 199.

I. iii. 66. *Towards marriage*; on the point of marriage.

I. iii. 75. *To launch their busy bags*; to advance, bring out, their money for the marriage. The reading *busy bags* is probably corrupt. Dodsley conjectured *pursy*. The original phrase may mean the bags, *i.e.* the money, they have so busily employed.

I. iii. 100. *O'ergive the love.* Some of the old as well as the modern editions read *leave the love.* This looks like a gloss due to the difficulty of *o'ergive.* But, though it is hard to find a parallel to the compound word, 'give over' would bear the required meaning of abandoning.

I. iii. 103. *Thou hast begot my life*; given me my life again.

I. iii. 116-117. 'What return will you freely render for the honour in which Mounchensey holds you?' The phrase 'upon the measure of thy grace' indicates that the return is one which cannot be exacted as a right; it must be left to the grace of Clare, and will be measured by that grace.

I. iii. 134. *To bustle for the set*; to busy ourselves to win the number of games that determines the victor.

I. iii. 140. *The milkmaids' cuts.* 'Cut,' says Nares, was a familiar expression for a common or labouring horse, either from its having the tail cut short, or from being cut as a gelding. In 1 *Henry IV.*, II. i. 5, 'Cut' is the name of the carrier's horse. The word is also applied to dogs in the phrase, 'cut and long tail'; where it certainly refers to the shortening of the tail.

II. i. 5. *Your ale is a Philistine fox*, etc. The allusion is to the story of Samson tying firebrands to the foxes' tails.

II. i. 55. *My Castilian dialogues*; my Castilian converses. A Castilian was a courtier of superfine breeding. Nares quotes from Marston's first Satire a couplet which does not define the meaning. In the same Satire there is another couplet which does:—

> 'But oh! the absolute Castilio,—
> He that can all the points of courtship show.'

Dialogues is used as a verb. Cf. *Timon of Athens*, II. ii. 56.

II. i. 58. *Little Geneva print.* 'An equivoque on the redness of his eyes from having drunk too much, and the small type in which the Scriptures were printed in the common Geneva version' (Hazlitt).

II. i. 75. *The citizen of good fellows*; he is an illiterate boor, yet he is fellow-citizen with more polished men.

II. ii. 2. *With shalls.* 'A quibble on *shall*, and *shale*, or *shell*. Churchyard, in his *Challenge*, 1593, says:—

"'Thus all with shall or shalles ye shal be fed."'

HAZLITT.

II. ii. 27. *His lustre.* It is well known that in Elizabethan English *his* was the possessive of the neuter as well as of the masculine pronoun.

II. ii. 35. *Neither shalt thou.* The old editions read *shouldst*; Hazlitt conjectured *shall'st*.

II. ii. 42. *Whose blood is hotter than ours is.* This line is metrically defective; but as the reading is found in all the early editions, the fault is probably due to the writer of the play.

II. ii. 56. *Soars*; 'soaring flight; thence, high-flown words, quarrel' (Warnke and Proescholdt). The line is metrically defective, and some violence is done to the word *soars*; but if we accept the alternative reading, *frowardness*, it is difficult to account for the appearance of *soars* in the earlier editions.

II. ii. 67, 68. 'Addressing his father' (Warnke and Proescholdt).

II. iii. 3. *The composure of weak frailty*; the elements which compose weak frailty. The idea of plurality conveyed by *composure* explains the plural verb.

II. iii. 18, 19. The want of you will drive him into a retirement that will waste his blood and make him pale.

II. iii. 20, 21. True love has the sweetness and harmony of music; but if the lovers are separated, their 'less worlds,' the microcosms of the disunited youth and maid, bear within them hell.

II. iii. 23. *We must part; the breath Of all advised corruption, pardon me.* This passage is probably corrupt. The reading of the text

is that of the old editions, but they have not the semi-colon at *part.* Hazlitt reads *ill* for *all*, has a semi-colon at *part*, and a comma at *corruption.* Warnke and Proescholdt put a full stop after *breath*, but do not attempt to explain the meaning. I may suggest as a possible meaning: 'We must part; pardon me for repeating what your corrupt fathers have deliberately enjoined.'

II. iii. 26. *Rougher spite to sever us.* Hazlitt's reading for the *do* of the old editions.

III. i. 39. *The sacring bell.* 'The little bell which is rung to give notice of the Host approaching, when it is carried in procession, as also in other offices of the Romish Church, is called the *sacring* or *consecration* bell, from the French word *sacrer.*' (Theobald's note on *Henry VIII.*, III. ii. 295, quoted by Hazlitt.)

III. i. 95. *To thrust Mounchensey's nose beside the cushion*; to lead Mounchensey astray, make him miss the mark. The cushion, says Nares, was probably a name for the mark at which archers shot.

III. ii. 5. *Our serious speech hath stolen upon the way, That we are come*; our serious speech has so beguiled the way, that, etc.

III. ii. 16. *My dear bosom.* 'Cf. the Shakespearian phrases *my dear heart, my dear blood, my dear soul*, in all of which *dear* has the signification of *inmost*' (Warnke and Proescholdt).

III. ii. 23. *Vent your spleens with tickling mirth*; be so tickled with the humour of it as to give passage to your spleens.

III. ii. 82-88. This passage is clearly corrupt. The reading in the text is that of all the editions previous to Warnke and Proescholdt. Some words, probably two or three lines, seem to have dropped out. The relative *who*, line 83, has no verb, unless it can be connected with *plotted* and *delivered.* Warnke and Proescholdt read *Harry* for *Fabell* in line 84, and explain: 'Peter Fabell, in the habit of Frier Hildersham, made his plot with the aid of Francke and Harry and with my own assistance, and *so*, *i.e.* in that dis-

guise, he conversed with Sir Arthur Clare.' The explanation is not satisfactory. 'Plotted by' can hardly mean 'made his plot with the aid of.'

III. ii. 90. *I was a-dream'd.* This is probably to be explained in the way suggested by Professor Skeat in his notes on similar passages in Chaucer, *The Pardoneres Prologue*, 406, and *The Frankeleyns Tale*, 1580. If so, the termination *ed* is 'not really a sign of the past participle, but a corruption of the ending *eth* (A.S. *að*), which is sometimes found at the end of a verbal substantive.'

III. ii. 137. *Turn tippet*; 'to make a complete change, particularly used of a maid becoming a wife' (Warnke and Proescholdt).

IV. i. 1. *Ye Hungarian pilchers.* For *Hungarian* see Glossary. Nares, *s.v. Hungarian*, says that *pilchers* is here used for *filchers*. This would certainly give an easy meaning, but there is no authority for this use of *pilcher*, and it is possible to explain the phrase without violence to the word, which means one who wears a pilch or garment of fur. The men addressed are 'pilchers' proleptically, because they hope to secure the skin of the deer; and they are Hungarians because their purposed booty is to be stolen.

IV. i. 33. *As true as velvet.* Probably the phrase is suggested by Sir John's reference to deer. 'A stag in velvet' is a stag with the soft covering of the young horns still on. It is not obvious why this should be specially true; but the host habitually uses words without much meaning.

IV. i. 34. *Grass and hay, etc.* The *etc.* means that Sir John repeats the rest of his customary speech.

IV. i. 39. *Potter's gate.* This is doubtless the modern Potter's Bar, a village which derived its name from an ancient bar or gate in Enfield Chase.

IV. i. 47. *The stone pricot.* 'Cf. *a stone horse, i.e.* a horse not castrated' (Warnke and Proescholdt).

IV. i. 85. *Coney oak.* No doubt an oak with a rabbit-hole under it. Murray's *Dictionary* quotes the phrases, 'coney-ground,' 'coney-garth.'

IV. i. 158 *sqq. My deer!—My daughter!* There is in this passage a whimsical suggestion of Shylock's cry for his ducats and his daughter.

IV. ii. 27. *A man of another element*; doomed to leave this world.

IV. ii. 44. *Mareterraneum skinker.* 'The Host seems to mean *mediterranean skinker*' (Warnke and Proescholdt).

V. i. 41. *A nun in approbation of her habit*; a novice.

V. i. 58. *Nor bear with me.* Collier conjectured *now* for *nor*; but Warnke and Proescholdt explain: 'Nor need you be indulgent to me: I am quite prepared to hear and to bear the whole truth."

V. i. 83. *Break our minds*; open, reveal our minds.

V. i. 128. *Is not this the George?* The signs have been changed. It appears from V. ii. 155 that Smug has been disguised as St. George; but why the plot should have required two St. Georges is an unexplained mystery.

V. ii. 3. *My old jennets balk my house, my castle.* The old reading was, *my old Jennert's banke, my horse, my castle.* Stevens conjectured *house* for *horse*, but attempted unsatisfactorily to explain *Jennert's* or *Jenert's bank* as a reference to the shop of some banker celebrated for his soundness. Hazlitt reads *my old jennet's back? my house* [*is*] *my castle.* Warnke and Proescholdt, by the simple and happy conjecture of *bauk* (the old spelling of *balk*) for *bank*, restore sense to the passage. The meaning is, 'My old horses shy at, avoid, my house, my castle.'

V. ii. 16. *The villanous world is turned manger*, etc. The world is a manger, from which each jade takes as much as possible without regard to the rights of others, while the ostler cheats all.

V. ii. 50. *Thou art an actor in this*, etc. The meaning seems to be that Sir Ralph's indignation is pretended (cf. above, 'leave tricks

and admiration'), and that in punishment of the pretence the redness of his face, betokening passion, will endure for ever.

v. ii. 53. *Trinidado sack*; I cannot discover what is the special point in *Trinidado sack*.

v. ii. 64. *Like a cockatrice's egg*; with as deadly effect as a young cockatrice. The cockatrice was believed to kill by the glance of its eye; and not improbably the true reading is *eye*, instead of *egg*. The old spelling, *ege*, leaves little difference between the two words. The reading of the text, however, yields a good meaning.

v. ii. 91. *Were you an actor In your own love's abuse?* did you help in the plot to defeat the plan of marriage between yourself and Millicent?

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